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ABSTRACT

Graduation 2010 is a public school curriculum project based on recent neurological research, the goal of which is to increase children's capacity to learn. The program consists of eight action plans, or strands: Arts, Music, Foreign Language, Reading/Language Development, Thinking Skills, Health/Emotional Health, Family Involvement, and Community Involvement. This is a report of the implementation of program goals during the first year of the project. Surveys were distributed to principals in the 12 elementary schools at midyear, and again at the end of the first year of implementation. Midyear surveys were open ended, and the end of the year surveys asked principals to rate the degree to which the steps of the plan had been implemented in their schools. Ratings were from 0 (no implementation) to 5 (fully implemented). After comparing principals' ratings with the list of 1997-98 goals for implementation, implementation was classified as low, medium, or high for each strand. At midyear, principals reported full implementation on two strands, and some implementation on all strands. Only a few schools reported no implementation at midyear. Strands for Art, Music, and Reading/Language Development had high implementation ratings at the end of the year, and the other strands had medium ratings. There was a clear shift from low and medium ratings at midyear to medium and high ratings at the end of the year. (Contains 10 tables and 56 references.) (Author/SLD)

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Evaluation of the First Year Implementation of Graduation 2010

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Abstract

Graduation 2010 is a public school curriculum project based on recent neurological research, the goal of which is to increase children's capacity to learn. The program consists of eight action plans or strands: Arts, Music, Foreign Language, Reading/Language Development, Thinking Skills, Health/Emotional Health, Family Involvement, and Community Involvement. This is a report of the implementation of program goals during the first year of the project. Surveys were distributed to principals in the 12 elementary schools at midyear, and again at the end of the first year of implementation. Midyear surveys were open ended, and the end of the year surveys asked principals to rate the degree to which the steps of the plan had been implemented in their schools. Ratings were from 0 (no implementation) to 5 (fully implemented). After comparing principals' ratings with the list of 1997-98 goals for implementation, implementation was classified as low, medium, or high for each strand. At midyear, principals reported full implementation on two strands, and some implementation on all other strands. Only a few schools reported no implementation at midyear. Using the list of 1997-98 goals as the standard, strands for Arts, Music, Reading/Language Development had high implementation ratings at the end of the year, and Health/Emotional Health, Family Involvement, and Thinking Skills had medium ratings. There was a clear shift from low and medium ratings at midyear, to medium and high ratings at the end of the year.

History and Literature Review

In early 1997, a steering committee of public educators and concerned citizens in a midsouth state's county school system formed to examine recent literature on neurological development and educational innovation and to determine what curricular changes could be made that would enhance the intellectual capacity of children in the county. Naming its effort Graduation 2010 for the graduation year of the children who would enter kindergarten in the fall of 1997, the committee identified eight areas where educational changes might prove beneficial: music, the arts, foreign language, thinking skills, family involvement, health and emotional health, reading and language development, and community involvement. After a community forum where the committee's initial findings and ideas were presented, the committee established separate subcommittees composed of volunteers from the forum to further research these areas. The expressed task for each subcommittee was to research available literature and to make recommendations about how best to apply the ideas gleaned. The steering committee asked the subcommittees to consider the following questions when developing each recommendation: Is it research based? Is it reasonable, practical, and feasible? What particular activities and experiences would occur at what age? Is this the most effective and efficient way to carry out this addition? The literature review that follows consists of articles each subcommittee used to makes its recommendations. As will become evident, most subcommittees relied on a combination of research reports and opinion articles in developing their recommendations.

Music

For the music subcommittee the most convincing empirical evidence for the advantages of early musical training was from the work of Rauscher and colleagues. Rauscher, Shaw, Levine,

and Ky (1994) and Rauscher and Shaw (1997) found that preschool children who received music training had better spatial reasoning ability than preschool children not receiving training. Likewise, Rauscher (1993) and Rauscher, Shaw, and Ky (1995) discovered improvement on the spatial reasoning section of Stanford-Binet when college students listened to Mozart, coined the Mozart effect. In each study, they discuss the important link between this ability and math and science skills. The subcommittee also found that other earlier researchers have reached similar conclusions (Roehmann & Wilson, 1988; Wilson, 1981, 1989).

Furthermore, musical training was found to be linked to improved listening skills (Jordan-DeCarbo, 1996), improved thinking skills (Pogonowski, 1987; Small, 1987), higher GPAs and SAT scores (Horne, 1983; McCarthy, 1992; Morrison, 1994; Rees, 1988), increased basic skills development (Maltester, 1986; Robitaille & O'Neal, 1981), and positive self-esteem (Lillemyer, 1983; Marshall, 1978).

Other literature studied by the music subcommittee included one article finding students who missed classes to study instrumental music showed no loss in achievement (Kvet, 1985) and several articles citing the positive findings of current research (Begley, 1996; Black, 1997; Cutietta, Hamann, & Walker, 1995; Gillespie, 1992; Hanratty 1997; Mickela, 1990; National Commission on Music Education, 1991; Oddleifson, 1989).

Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted 22 recommendations for implementation. From these, the steering committee selected one recommendation as the target for the 1997-98 school year: "Purchase of Yamaha lab (sic) for all 12 elementary schools, train music teachers, and begin music keyboarding for all elementary schools" (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

The Arts

The arts committee relied on one research article (Crum, 1996) for supporting evidence that participation in the arts is linked to student achievement. In her study of the 1990-1995 national SAT data, Crum found the scores of students who reported participating in the arts to be significantly higher than the scores of students not participating in the arts. Another article (Yaffe, 1989) provided some anecdotal evidence for the connection between the arts and achievement. The other articles reviewed by this committee only cite others' research (Brudnak, 1997; Dickinson, 1993)

Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted three recommendations for implementation, all of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year: "1. Identify an arts facilitator in each school to serve on district committee to increase integration of the arts. 2. Provide nine arts experiences for each kindergarten child (three each in visual arts, dance, and theater). 3. Provide a RiverPark experience for kindergarten students" (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

Foreign Language

This subcommittee's review of the literature revealed many benefits to the study of foreign language. Perhaps the most obvious is greater global understanding. More related to the subcommittee's task was the finding that foreign language study is related to better basic skills (Rafferty, 1986), higher SAT scores (Cooper, 1987), improved listening skills and memory, and greater divergent thinking and creativity (Landry, 1973). Additionally, foreign language study has been linked to improved self-esteem (Hart, 1993; Holobow, Genessee, & Lambert, 1991). Other articles reviewed by this committee either cite other studies or provide guidance for successful

implementation of a foreign language program (Begley, 1996; Harrington-Lueker, 1997; Scheibel, 1997; Willis, 1996)

Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted eight recommendations for implementation, two of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year: "1. Initiate teaching simple vocabulary to kindergarten. 2. Develop video program for 6-year cycle" (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

Thinking Skills

This subcommittee quickly gravitated to one particular thinking skills program, Talents Unlimited. It relied on the program's report (Chissom & McLean, 1993), which cites at least ten empirical research studies that have found the program to be beneficial. One additional article (Barbieri, 1988) cites anecdotal evidence of the program's success.

Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted seven recommendations, two of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year: "1. Identify faculty who have already been trained in Talents and develop training program for those who have not in order to implement the Talents program district wide. 2. Begin to implement strategic games such as chess " (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

Family Involvement

To study this strand, the subcommittee looked at a variety of articles that either asserted the importance of family involvement (Gauvain and Rogoff, 1989; Henderson, 1981, 1987; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Johnson, 1990, 1992; Shore, 1994) or provided suggestions for a successful family involvement program (Loucks, 1992; Owen, 1988; Reidland, 1994; What's working in parent involvement, 1997). Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted 29

recommendations, five of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year:

> 1. Improve first contact between home and school by hosting an orientation or family picnic. 2. Establish a homework committee composed of teachers and parents to establish guidelines for homework that is reasonable and enhances education. 3. Establish a family involvement committee in each school as a standing PTO committee. 4. Increase the number of opportunities where parents have the opportunity to come to school and recognize families for their involvement. 5. Improve communication with families through use of homework planner and other written communication. (Graduation 2010, Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5)

Health and Emotional Health

This subcommittee only reviewed three pieces of literature, the American School Food Service Association's Keys to Excellence: Standards of Practice for Nutrition Integrity, the Dietary Guides for Americans, and the Food Guide Pyramid. We, the evaluators, have yet to review these documents. Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted 25 recommendations, two of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year: "1. Provide at least one day a week of service by the school nurse to each school. 2. Develop a fitness walking program for students." (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

Reading and Language Development

All the research reviewed by this committee indicated that early parental involvement (Berger, 1987; U.S. Department of Education, 1986) and early school intervention were the keys to reading success. Much research has revealed the crucial role parents play in students' academic success (Henderson, 1981).

Related to parents' reading to children, Becher (1985) found that parents are more likely to value reading to their children if teachers make parents aware of the benefits. More importantly, studies have shown superior achievement and more positive attitudes in children whose parents have read to them on a regular basis. In a broader sense, recent research has revealed the importance of oral language development in academic achievement (Snow, Tabors, Nicholson, & Kurland, 1995). Thus, children better able to communicate orally have an academic advantage.

Related to programs for parent involvement in reading, extensive research has demonstrated that such programs significantly increase student achievement (Henderson, 1981). However, some research suggests that many parents participate only to the level to which they believe they have been invited.

Based on this literature, this subcommittee submitted 13 recommendations, one of which the steering committee targeted for the 1997-98 school year: "1. Implement Kentucky Reads grant targeting primary children in each of 12 elementary schools who are at least one grade level behind in reading" (Graduation 2010 Steering Committee, 1997, p. 5).

Community Involvement

The general goal of the Community Involvement strand was to obtain corporate sponsorship for each class at the district level. For this reason, there was no list of specific Community Involvement goals at the school level.

Method

During the first year of Graduation 2010, the research team met several times with administrators and steering committee members in Daviess County to plan an evaluation strategy that would be responsive to the needs of the program. Discussion resulted in the formulation of preliminary research questions along with a list of evidence required to answer each question. The complete list of questions and related results will be reported elsewhere, however, the first question dealt with the degree to which the program was actually implemented in the schools. Evidence required to answer the question about implementation over the next few years includes surveys of principals and the superintendent, data collection forms for schools, and school visitations. For the first year, however, only the surveys were used to gauge the degree to which the intended steps of the program had been implemented.

Each strand of Graduation 2010 had at least one recommendation, and each recommendation had a list of implementation steps. The list of implementation steps varied in number from a minimum of 3 in the Arts strand to a maximum of 29 in the Family Involvement strand, and in some cases implementation steps were written such that they included various parts.

Each subcommittee determined goals to be accomplished in the first year of implementation, and with a few exceptions, these goals corresponded closely to the original steps for implementation. This more limited list of goals expected in the first year of the program was used for the midyear evaluation of implementation. Table 1

gives the total number of implementation steps by strand, as well as the number included in the 1997-98 list of goals. The numbers of goals are listed in parentheses in Table 1.

Table 1

Number of implementation goals for each strand of Graduation 2010

Strand	No. of steps	No. steps in 97-98 goals	
Arts	3	3	(1,2,3)
Family Involvement	29	5	(1,7,12,19,22/23)
Health/Emotional Health	25	4	(1,2,3,25)
Music	22	1	(3)
Foreign Language	8	2	(5,7)
Reading	13	1	(1)
Thinking Skills	7	2	(1,5)

Midyear Implementation Survey

In February, 1998, during the first year of implementation, the superintendent sent an open-ended survey to the 12 elementary school principals asking them to report the progress in their schools on the eight strands of Graduation 2010. Using the list of 1997-98 goals statements as the standard, each response was classified as a 1 (not implemented at all), a 2 (partially implemented), or a 3 (fully implemented).

End of the year Implementation Survey

At the end of the first year, in the spring of 1998, anonymous surveys were distributed to all 12 elementary schools. Principals were asked to report the degree of

implementation in their schools on a scale from 0 (no implementation) to 5 (full implementation) for each step recommended by the strand committees.

Results

Midyear Implementation Survey-1997-98 goals:

Complete responses were obtained from 11 of the 12 schools and partial responses were obtained from the 12th school. Table 2 contains the number of schools reporting to have each of the three levels of implementation.

Table 2

Number of schools (n = 12) at midyear reporting no implementation (1), some implementation (2), or full implementation (3) of the 1997-98 goals of Graduation 2010.

Strands	None (1)	Some (2)	Full (3)
Arts	3	8	1
Family Involvement	2	10	0
Foreign Language	3	9	0
*Health/Emotional Health	0	0	11
Music	0	0	12
Reading/Language Development	1	4	7
*Thinking Skills	2	8	1
*Community Involvement	1	10	0

*Only 11 schools reported for this strand.

Two strands (Music and Health/Emotional Health) were reported to have been fully implemented, although information about Health/Emotional Health was missing from one school. Seven schools reported full implementation of the Kentucky Reads program which was the goal for the first year. Another four schools reported some progress toward that goal and one reported no progress.

Some progress was reported on remaining strands, with between four and ten schools reporting some level of activity (see Table 2). Eight of the 12 schools reported some progress toward the Arts goals, one reported full implementation and three reported no implementation.

For Family Involvement, 10 schools reported some implementation and two reported no progress toward the goals. The general goal of the Community Involvement strand was to obtain corporate sponsorship for each class at the district level. For this reason, there was no list of specific Community Involvement goals at the school level. On the midyear survey however, in response to a question about Community Involvement, 10 schools reported some activity, one reported none, and information from one school was missing.

Nine schools reported some level of progress on the goals for Foreign Language, and three reported none. Eight schools reported some progress on the Thinking Skills component, one reported full implementation, and two reported no progress, with one school not reporting on this strand.

End of the year Implementation Survey-1997-98 goals:

Using the list of 1997-98 goals as the standard for self reported progress at the

Table 3

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting no implementation (1), some implementation (2), or full implementation (3) of the 1997-98 goals of Graduation 2010.

Strands	1997-98 goals	None (1)	Some (2)	Full (3)
Arts:				
	1. Identify arts facilitator	0	1	10
	2. Provide 9 arts experiences	0	0	10
	3. Provide Riverpark experience for K	0	0	11
Family Involvement:				
	1. Improve first contact, picnic	0	1	10
	7. Homework committee	2	2	7
	23. Improve written communication	3	5	2
	23a. Interim progress reports	0	3	8
Foreign Language:				
	5. Teach simple vocabulary in K	1	3	7
	7. Develop video program	4	2	4
Health/Emotional Health:				
	1-3. School nurse at least one day a week	0	1	10
	25. Fitness walking program	2	2	1
Music:				
	3. Begin keyboarding program in labs	0	0	11
Reading/Language Development:				
	1. Implement Kentucky Reads	0	1	10
	1a. Orient teachers	0	2	9
	1b. Train coaches	0	1	10
	1c. Identify students	0	1	10
	1d. Target parents to train	2	5	3
	1e. Begin student coach interaction	1	2	8
Thinking skills:				
	1. Train teachers in Talents	3	5	3
	2. Begin strategic games	4	2	5

end of the year, and using the same scale from 1 (no implementation) to 3 (full implementation), end of the year results are presented in Table 3 for comparison with midyear results previously presented in Table 2. Eleven of the 12 schools reported.

At the end of the year, 10 of the 11 schools reported full implementation of the three goals (#1-3) for the Arts strand (identify an arts facilitator, provide 9 arts experiences, and provide a Riverpark experience), compared with only one school at midyear (see Table 2). All 11 schools reported full implementation of the Music goal (#3-to install keyboard labs in the school), and 10 reported having a school nurse at least once a week (#1-3 of the Health/Emotional Health strand). In addition to the goal of having a school nurse in every school, three schools reported some progress toward the Health/Emotional Health goal of establishing a fitness walking program (#25).

Between the midyear and end of the year reporting, there was a shift in the number of schools reporting full implementation rather than partial implementation on goals associated with Family Involvement, Foreign Language, Reading/Language Development, and Thinking Skills (see Tables 2 & 3).

<u>End of the year Implementation Survey-All goals:</u>

In Tables 4-10, the end of the year survey results are presented by implementation step for each strand of Graduation 2010. Principals were asked to rate the implementation of each step from 0 to 5, where 0 indicated no implementation, 1 indicated very little implementation, and 5 indicated full implementation. Note that Tables 4-10 include some additional implementation steps beyond those listed in the 1997-98 goals.

Table 4 contains the 11 responding principals' reported implementation for the Arts strand. The overall rating for implementation of the Arts was the highest of all the strands. Ten out of 11 principals said they had an arts facilitator, had provided nine experiences in the arts, and had provided at least one Riverpark experience for kindergarten children by the end of the 1997-98 year.

Table 4

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Arts strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand	Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Arts:							
	1. Identify arts facilitator	0	0	1	0	0	10
	2. Provide 9 arts experiences	0	0	0	0	0	10
	3. Provide Riverpark experience for K	0	0	0	0	0	11

Table 5 contains the 11 principals' reported implementation for the Family Involvement strand. The number of schools reporting full implementation ranged from two to 11, with at least some implementation on every step, and more progress on steps #1 (improve first contact with the school) and #3 (make kindergarten registration special). The overall rating for implementation of Family Involvement could be called moderate.

Table 6 contains the reported implementation for the Foreign Language strand. Of the eight implementation steps for Foreign Language, between four and 11 schools reported full implementation of the various steps, resulting in an overall moderate degree of implementation. Step #3 (determine language to offer) showed the most progress, and #7 (develop video program for 6-year cycle) the least (see Table 6).

Table 5

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Family Involvement strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand	Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Family Involvement:							
	1. Improve first contact, picnic	0	0	0	1	0	10
	3. Special kindergtn. registration	0	0	0	0	0	11
	4. Personal notes to students	3	1	0	0	0	6
	7. Homework committee	2	0	0	0	2	7
	22. Include student planners	2	1	0	0	1	7
	23. Improve written communication	3	1	2	1	1	2
	23a. Interim progress reports	0	0	0	1	2	8
	*26. Public relations person	1	0	0	1	0	9

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

Table 6

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Foreign Language strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand	Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Foreign Language:							
	*1. Determine practices/talents	0	1	1	0	1	8
	*2. Discover language exposure	1	1	0	0	1	8
	*3. Determine language offered	0	0	0	0	0	11
	*4. Professional development	2	0	0	0	2	7
	5. Teach simple vocabulary in K	1	0	0	2	1	7
	*6. Employ instructors	3	1	0	0	0	5
	*8. Expand curriculum for 1999	3	0	0	2	0	6
	7. Develop video program	4	0	0	2	0	4

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

Table 7

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Health/Emotional Health strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand	Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Health/Emotional Health:							
	1-3. School nurse at least one day a week	0	0	0	0	1	10
	*4. Include abstinence/prevention	2	0	0	0	0	3
	*5. PSI curriculum in 6th grade	1	0	0	0	0	0
	*6. PSI to 7th graders	1	0	0	0	0	0
	*7. Provide "Baby think.."	0	0	0	0	0	1
	*8. Purchase materials	1	0	0	0	0	0
	*9. Continue Reality Fairs	1	0	0	0	0	0
	25. Fitness walking program	2	2	0	0	0	1

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

There were eight steps for Health/Emotional Health. Step #1(provide a school nurse at least one day a week) was fully implemented by nearly all schools, and most of the others not yet implemented (see Table 7). Implementation would be considered high for the 1997-98 goals and low for the other implementation steps.

The Music strand had the most steps (19) to implement (see Table 8). Full implementation ranged from one school on #14 (assure success for every student), to all 11 reporting schools on #3 (begin keyboarding program in labs) and on #4 (assess what equipment will be necessary). There was much variation in the amount of implementation of the other steps, resulting in an overall moderate rating for the Music strand.

Table 8

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Music strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand	Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Music:							
	*1. Allocate space	1	0	0	0	1	9
	*2. Allocate additional space	0	0	0	1	1	9
	3. Begin keyboarding program in labs	0	0	0	0	0	11
	*4. Assess necessary equipment	0	0	0	0	0	11
	*5. Obtain Orff instruments	3	2	0	0	0	6
	*6. Purchase glockenspiels	4	1	0	2	1	3
	*7. Integrate curriculum	0	0	0	0	2	9
	*8. Begin MIE program	2	0	0	0	3	4
	*9. Coordinate curriculum	1	0	2	0	2	4
	*10. Integrate into regular curr.	1	0	1	3	0	6
	*11. Three 30 min. per week	4	0	0	1	2	4
	*12. Classify according to skills	8	1	0	0	0	2
	*13. Establish goals	3	2	2	2	0	2
	*14. Assure success every student	5	1	1	1	2	1
	*15. Encourage teachers to train	3	1	2	1	0	4
	*16. Inservice on music	4	3	1	1	0	2
	*20. Recognize emerging talents	2	0	4	2	1	2
	*21. After school for at-risk	5	1	0	1	0	4
	*22. Bring musicians	0	0	1	3	2	5

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

The Reading/Language Development strand (see Table 9) had 12 implementation steps, and full implementation ranged from one school on steps #6 (establish guidelines) and #11 (give parent workshops) to 10 schools reporting full implementation on steps #1 (implement Kentucky Reads), #1b (train coaches), and #1c (identify students in need). The general rating on Reading/Language Development would be moderate.

Table 9

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Reading/Language Development strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Reading/Language Development:						
1. Implement Kentucky Reads	0	0	0	0	1	10
1a. Orient teachers	0	0	1	0	1	9
1b. Train coaches	0	0	0	0	1	10
1c. Identify students	0	0	0	0	1	10
1d. Target parents to train	2	3	2	0	0	3
1e. Begin student coach interaction	1	0	0	0	2	8
*2a. Feasibility of Wrap-Around	3	1	1	0	1	3
*2b. Classroom space	3	1	0	0	1	3
*2c. Enrollment fee scale	3	1	0	0	1	3
*2d. How to inform parents	3	1	0	0	1	3
*6. Establish guidelines	2	2	1	0	0	1
*11. Parent workshops	4	0	1	0	0	1

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

Between one and five schools reported full implementation of three of the four steps for implementation of the Thinking Skills strand (see Table 10). Less than half the schools reported that they had trained teachers in Talents or that they had begun to teach children to play chess or other strategic games, which would result in a relatively low overall rating on Thinking Skills.

Table 10

Number of schools (n = 11) at the end of the year reporting at each level of implementation for implementation steps of the Thinking Skills strand (0 = no implementation, 1 = very little implementation, and 5 = fully implemented and functioning.

Strand Implementation steps	0	1	2	3	4	5
Thinking Skills:						
1. Train teachers in Talents	3	1	1	1	2	3
*5. Purchase chess materials	4	0	0	1	1	5
*6. Feasibility of library card	8	1	1	0	0	1
*7. Posters of Bloom's Taxonomy	10	1	0	0	0	0

*Not one of the 1997-98 goals

In summary, considering all implementation steps and looking at the overall self report data for the 11 schools reporting, two strands (Thinking skills and Health/Emotional Health) appear to have been relatively low in implementation, four strands (Reading/Language Development, Music, Foreign Language, and Family Involvement), moderate in implementation, and one (Arts) high in implementation. The reader is asked to note that these general ratings are influenced by the number of steps in each strand, especially when some of those steps were not included in the 1997-98 goals. When overall ratings are limited to the list of 1997-98 goals, Music, Arts, and Reading /Language Development merit high implementation ratings, and Health/Emotional Health, Family Involvement, and Thinking Skills would have medium ratings. Progress toward implementation is further evidenced by the shifts from low and medium categories at midyear to medium and high categories at the end of the year.

Discussion

Analyses of these data were complicated by a number of factors. Since the strands had unequal number of implementation steps, it was somewhat arbitrary to classify each strand as low, moderate or high in implementation. Such classifications tended to handicap strands with many steps even though much had been accomplished in those strands by the end of the first year.

The complexity of the program makes it difficult to evaluate the implementation of the various strands. The scope of the program requires much cooperation and planning, and it was never intended to be implemented all at once. Implementation during this first year was not required of any school, and decisions about what and when to implement were left up to the individual school.

The midyear surveys were not anonymous, and were to be returned to the central office, which may have resulted in some tendency to give more positive responses than would have been given otherwise. It was not surprising that there was a wide range of responses on the midyear survey of principals since some principals reported much more detail than others, some reported successes, and others problems. Another problem associated with the surveys was the imperfect alignment between the survey questions and the list of goals to be evaluated.

Since the level of implementation at individual schools will certainly have effects on outcomes to be measured over the next few years of Graduation 2010, schools will be classified as either low, medium, or high implementation overall, and on each strand, so

that differences in implementation can be taken into account when analyzing performance data collected.

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